

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on November 17.

**Remarks on Receiving the Order of the State of the Turkish Republic Award in Ankara**

*November 15, 1999*

First of all, let me thank you for this beautiful Order of State award. You know, in my country, they give you these awards normally when you're one step away from death. [Laughter] It's quite a wonderful thing to receive one when at least you still feel quite normal. [Laughter] And particularly, an award that symbolizes our shared values and the long friendship between our two countries, one that goes back in many ways to the beginning of our country and, clearly, for the last 50 years, back to the beginning of the Truman Doctrine and the commitment of the United States to the security and integrity of Turkey.

In these last 50 years, we have been partners from Korea to Kosovo, against aggression and oppression, and as we look ahead to the future, we will have many opportunities for richer and deeper partnerships.

I would just briefly observe that it is an irony of history that we are on the edge of a new millennium—which will be shaped by unbelievable advances in technology, an explosion in information, and great leaps forward in science—but the biggest problem the world has is that everywhere people are too much in the grip of the oldest difficulty of human societies: We still are prone to fear people who are different than ourselves.

And so, all across the world, we see ethnic, racial, religious conflicts. We see people remembering old reasons for geopolitical difficulties, when new opportunities for cooperation are staring them right in the face. And it is for those of us who are moving into this new millennium to leave our children a more unified vision of human society and of human cooperation across national lines, one that gives all children, without regard to their station or birth, a chance to live up to their dreams—boys and girls alike; Muslims, Jews, Christians alike; people who come from any part of the world.

I hope that we can be faithful, Turkey and the United States, to the ideals and dreams of our founders and, together, leave that legacy of a unifying vision of human life.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 7:50 p.m. in the Reception Hall at the Presidential Palace. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of President Suleyman Demirel of Turkey.

**Remarks at a State Dinner Hosted by President Demirel in Ankara**

*November 15, 1999*

President and Mrs. Demirel, Prime Minister and Mrs. Ecevit, to the government coalition partners, the other parliamentary leaders, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Turkish and American friends.

Let me begin by thanking you, Mr. President, for the wonderful reception. I am delighted to see so many friends of our two countries at a moment of great optimism for our relationship, tempered by great sadness over the tragedy of the earthquakes you have suffered.

President Eisenhower visited Turkey for a day in 1959. President Bush came for 2 days in 1991. I am proud to be spending 5 days here. Every visit seems to be twice as long as the last one. [Laughter] The good news is, our partnership is becoming more important every year. The bad news is that if American Presidents keep this up, some day one of us will not be welcome here. [Laughter]

Our relations go back to the beginning of the United States. Not long after our country was created, a high official, the Grand Senor, at what was then Constantinople, saw a ship flying the American flag sail into the harbor. Because the flag with stars on it was considered to be a lucky sign, he predicted then that the people of Turkey and the United States would enjoy a long friendship. Now, his prophecy has come to pass.

Our friendship deepened more than 50 years ago, when another ship sailed into the Bosphorus. I'm told that every citizen of your country then alive remembers the day the